

## UTAH NATIONAL GUARD [6306]

### CARBON COUNTY COAL STRIKE RECORDS, 1903-1904; 1909

0.2 cu. ft. and 1 microfilm reel

**DESCRIPTION:** These records provide an account of the causes and effects of a strike and the role of the National Guard in maintaining order. A labor conflict between striking coal mine workers and the Utah Fuel Company in Scofield, Winter Quarters, Castle Gate, Sunnyside, and Clear Creek resulted in an atmosphere that threatened to become violent. The sheriff of Carbon County, notified Governor Heber M. Wells that he and other law enforcement agents needed assistance to maintain the peace. In response, Governor Wells issued a proclamation calling out the Guard on November 23, 1903. The papers consist largely of letters, telegrams, and minutes. Much of the correspondence was with Governor Wells. As governor, Wells was also commander-in-chief of the National Guard. Other correspondence is between Adjutant General Charles S. Burton and Brigadier General John Q. Cannon. Less frequent correspondents include other Guard officers, Utah Fuel Company staff and owners, Carbon County officials and citizens, the Italian Counsel, the Coal Mine Inspector, miners, and others.

The correspondence sent to Governor Wells documents the ever shifting situation. Mine operators refused to recognize the United Mine Workers and refused to pay employees every two weeks rather than monthly; miners decided to strike until the labor union's right to represent them was accepted. There are some letters to Wells from miners objecting to labor organizers being stopped on county roads by mine operators, complaints of harassment by Utah Fuel hired guards, etc. There are also numerous letters from mine operators objecting to strikers and organizers interfering with those miners who wished to work, town council resolutions opposing unionization forwarded by Utah Fuel managers, etc.

On December 1, 1903, a meeting was held by Governor Wells with Utah Fuel Company representatives, the General Superintendent of the Rio Grande Railroad (the railroad shipped

coal and transported the National Guard), the Utah Coal Mine Inspector, the Italian Consul (most of the strikers were Italian), and the Adjutant General of the National Guard. The minutes of the meeting and the supporting documentation for Utah Fuel Company statements are included. The documentation included and cited in the minutes include copies of circulars from the United Mine Workers advising miners to strike, opposing circulars from the fuel company, pay scale listings, and telegrams between company officials documenting the daily events during the strike at the various mines.

In addition to Utah Fuel Company letters, Wells received daily telegrams or mailed reports from the National Guard's Brigadier General John Q. Cannon who arrived in the area on November 22, 1903. Cannon provided constant updates of troop movements and activities until the last of the troops returned to their home stations on January 24, 1904. Cannon, in turn, received correspondence from his superiors, particularly Adjutant General Charles S. Burton, and from his staff. Much of the logistical correspondence pertains to furlough requests, supply purchases, general orders, and transportation of troops.

After the troops were sent home, trouble continued, and there are letters and telegrams to the Governor from Utah Fuel citing problems continuing into May--particularly problems in Helper where strikers were violating quarantine restrictions. There are also letters from the sheriff's department who had attempted to arrest Mother Jones and others at Helper and from the county attorney in regard to the arrests.

Finally there are various documents wrapping up strike matters: expense reports, a comprehensive summary of actions by Brigadier General Cannon to the Adjutant General dated December 31, 1904, and a report dated January 27, 1909 to the federal Division of Militia Affairs from the Adjutant General stating which companies had done duty in Carbon County.

**ARRANGEMENT:** The series is arranged chronologically by day. Attachments remain with the date of the cover letter.

**RELATED RECORDS:** Series 6308, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S RECORDS, contains some administrative records on the role of the National Guard during the strike. Series 235, Governor Well's CORRESPONDENCE, contains a few letter book copies of letters written by Wells in response to letters or telegrams in this series.

**PROCESSING NOTE:** Processing was begun by J. Brent Brinkerhoff in 1990 and completed in 1992 by A. C. Cone. Misfiled folders of National Guard records were noted inserted with the records of the Coal Mine Inspector in 2000 and the series updated then. The records were then microfilmed for reference use in 2002.

**PREFERRED CITATION:** Cite the Utah State Archives and Records Service, the creating

agency name, the series title, and the series number.

### CONTAINER LIST

<b>Reel</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	1	1	1903, Nov 15-25
1	1	2	1903, Nov 26
1	1	3	1903, Nov 27-30
1	1	4	1903, Dec 1 [minutes]
1	1	5	1903, Dec 1-4
1	1	6	1903, Dec 5-11
1	1	7	1903, Dec 12-16
1	1	8	1903, Dec 17-24
1	1	9	1903, Dec 26-31
1	1	10	1904, Jan
1	1	11	1904, Feb-July
1	1	12	1904, Dec
1	1	13	1909, Jan